

GAGOSIAN

Gagosian to Present Two-Part Survey of Works by Nam June Paik

The First Major Exhibition in New York Dedicated to the Artist Since 2014

Curated by John G. Hanhardt, Organizer of Historic Retrospectives at the Whitney Museum of American Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and Smithsonian American Art Museum



Nam June Paik, *Zen for TV*, 1963–90, manipulated 19-inch color television and acrylic paint, 19 1/2 × 17 × 17 inches (49.5 × 43.2 × 43.2 cm) © Nam June Paik Estate

There is no way to know in advance, because life has no “fast-forward” or “rewind” buttons. So, you go step by step, and if you make a mistake you try to correct it with another mistake.

—Nam June Paik

NEW YORK, May 2, 2022—Gagosian is pleased to present *Art in Process*, a two-part survey of works by Nam June Paik (1932–2006) spanning his career. The first part of the exhibition will take place at Gagosian’s 555 West 24th Street location from May 24 to July 22, 2022. The second part will take place at Gagosian’s Park & 75 location from July 19 to August 26, 2022. This is the gallery’s second solo exhibition of Paik’s work, following the 2015 presentation of *The Late Style* in Hong Kong. It follows *The Future Is Now*, a retrospective organized by Tate Modern and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) that was presented at Tate Modern, London, and traveled to the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, SFMOMA, and National Gallery Singapore in 2021 and 2022. *Art in Process* is curated by John G. Hanhardt, who also organized the retrospectives *Nam June Paik* at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1982), and *Nam June Paik: Global Visionary* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC (2011), in addition to *The Worlds of Nam June Paik* at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2000).

Melding an early training in classical music and subsequent interest in musical composition with radical, collaborative approaches to aesthetics and performance, Paik produced multimedia works that introduced the technology of television into the realm of fine art. Born in Seoul, he moved to West Germany in 1956, where he became an influential member of the Fluxus group. Eight years later, he relocated to New York, further establishing himself as a figure in the countercultural and avant-garde movements of the 1960s. Paik's extensive social network and international background laid the foundation for a global conception of art that straddled painting, sculpture, performance, music, and electronic imagery. An increasingly prescient and significant figure in today's world of mass media and artificial intelligence, he cultivated moments of overlap, exchange, and symbiosis between the human body and its technological counterparts.

At Gagosian's 555 West 24th Street gallery, the first part of the exhibition surveys Paik's practice as it developed over four decades. On view is a diverse selection of work ranging from early forays into multimedia to late paintings and video sculptures. The *Opus Paintings* (1975)—a suite of small oil-on-canvas works scattered across the gallery wall—render the familiar, rotund form of the classic television set in fluid brushstrokes and weightless aerial suspension. Titled as a tribute to the location of his Manhattan studio, *359 Canal Street* (1991) evokes the image of the artist's workspace through an old-fashioned desk filled with newspaper clippings and letters from Paik's associates, while cathode ray tubes affixed to the wall above conjure the generative power of a technologically interconnected world. The second part of *Art in Process*, at Gagosian's Park & 75 gallery, will feature Paik's trio of satellite broadcasts from the 1980s as well as a number of his intimate and elegiac "late style" televisions.

Paik also looked back to historical moments, citing the Silk Road as a prototype for international exchange. Following this impulse, he often incorporated antique objects into his sculptures, juxtaposing Korean ceramics, Chinese scrolls, and statues of Buddha with modern television sets and cameras. For *Lion* (2005), Paik acquired an Indian-made wooden sculpture of the titular animal, painted it with vibrant colors and symbols, and framed it against a majestic arch of television screens, each showing looped psychedelic footage of nature documentaries and abstract kaleidoscopic patterns. Also on view are *Beuys Projection* (1990) and *Berlin Wall* (2005). The former is a video installation documenting a 1986 concert in Tokyo that Paik performed with Joseph Beuys, his close friend and fellow Fluxus artist, while the latter comprises two separate sections of the notorious blockade, both painted with Paik's trademark television-shaped pictographs and humanoid motifs. The brightly colored sculpture transforms the wall into a welcoming portal—the "electronic superhighway" that he first imagined in 1974—embodying its maker's dream of open borders and unfettered communication.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue featuring essays by John G. Hanhardt and Gregory Zinman.

In conjunction with the exhibition, Gagosian will copresent a program with Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) at Anthology Film Archives on June 30 at 7:30pm ET. The program will showcase a selection of Paik's analog and early single-channel works alongside Internet-era works by artists engaging the same spirit, highlighting their shared strategy of playfully deploying commercial technologies to produce their own experimental work.

Nam June Paik was born in 1932 in Seoul, and died in 2006 in Miami. His work is included in museum collections worldwide. Exhibitions include *Projects*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (1977); Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (1978–79); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1982, traveled to Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago); *Tricolor Video*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (1982–83); *Mostly Video*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (1984); *Video Time*, Kunsthalle Basel (1991); *Video Space*, Kunsthaus Zürich (1991); *Retrospective*, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul (1992); *The Worlds of Nam June Paik*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2000, traveled to Ho-Am Gallery and Rodin Gallery, Seoul; and Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain); *Global Groove 2004*, Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin (2004); Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, Germany (2010, traveled to Tate Liverpool, England); *In the Tower*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (2011); *Global Visionary*, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC

(2012–13); *Becoming Robot*, Asia Society, New York (2014); *In Character*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2017); *The Future Is Now*, Tate Modern, London (2019–20, traveled to Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 2020; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2021; and National Gallery Singapore, 2021–22). Representing Germany, Paik and Hans Haacke were awarded a Golden Lion at the 45th Biennale di Venezia.

#NamJunePaik

NAM JUNE PAIK

Art in Process: Part One

Opening reception: Tuesday, May 24, 6–8pm

May 24–July 22, 2022

555 West 24th Street, New York

Art in Process: Part Two

Opening reception: Tuesday, July 19, 6–8pm

July 19–August 26, 2022

Park & 75, 821 Park Avenue, New York

Press

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